

New Hardware



FOR 2015

By Bob Saydlowski

It's a love/hate relationship. Every time we drag a trap case filled to the brim with heavy metal up a flight of stairs at 3:00 o'clock in the morning, we curse the day we chose to play an instrument that requires so much hardware. But then there's that moment, after setting up your kit, when you stand back and admire all those drums and cymbals, stationed at precise heights and angles, and supported by gleaming chrome stands, when it all suddenly seems worthwhile.

Some compare it to a motorcycle; others consider it a chrome forest. However

you look at it, hardware makes a drum kit complete and fully functional. Today there are so many options, from lightweight, simple designs to high-tech marvels of engineering with adjustments for every possible setting and function. It's no wonder drummers drool over the thought of shiny new things that can make their drumming obsession a bit easier and more fun.

This year saw its fair share of new hardware launches, from pedals and stands to thrones and accessories. As always, we want to help you make some sense of the tidal wave. Here's our rundown of the latest and greatest in drum hardware for 2015.

PEDAL TO THE METAL

1 Best known for its drum cases and high-tech sticks, **Ahead** entered the drum pedal arena this year in a big way.

The company's Mach 1 Pro single pedal (\$154 MSRP) features a dual chain drive, a stainless steel drive shaft, fully adjustable beater angle and spring tension, and a multi-positioning hoop clamp that self-adjusts to the curve of the bass drum hoop. It's also available as a Quick Torque model (\$245 MSRP) that sports a special eccentric cam



3 PDP/DW completes its Concept Series hardware line by introducing a direct-drive Concept pedal available in single and double models.

to enhance speed and nuanced play. Double pedal versions are available, both with and without the Quick Torque feature (\$499 and \$399 MSRP, respectively).

2 New to the U.S. market for 2015 are the **Natal Pro Series** and **Standard Series** bass drum pedals. Both have

two different cam options: a fast cam for greater power and attack, or a smooth cam for enhanced dynamics and subtle playing nuances. Each model has a self-leveling hoop clamp, nonslip footplate, and the ability to adjust the beater arc independently from the cam. Single pedal MSRPs range from \$155 to \$287.50, while double versions are \$447.50 and \$722.50. (Lefty models are also available.)

3 Last year saw the launch of the expansive PDP/DW Concept Series hardware line, which seemed to cover every possible hardware need — except one (*Editor's note: see section head above for a hint at what it was*). So it wasn't entirely surprising to learn that the company closed the circle by introducing a complementary Concept bass pedal this year, which features a direct-drive linkage for smoothness and speed, similar to more expensive pedals on the market. Its sleek

1 The Mach 1 Pro Quick Torque pedal from Ahead features a special eccentric cam.



2 Natal's Standard Series pedal offers two different cam options.

and streamlined appearance makes it a thing to behold, with an extended-length brushed aluminum footboard and low-mass cam. The pedal has the new DWSM101Air beater, a DW-style spring rocker adjustment, and an aluminum base plate for sturdy support and reduced weight. Available as a single (\$218.99 MSRP) and double model (\$436.99).

Iron Cobra pedals — and their numerous progenies — have become an important franchise in Tama's hardware catalog. This year we saw the latest incarnation in the new Speed Cobra 310 (MSRP \$129.98), a more affordable option to the Speed Cobra 910 design. Clocking in at a lower price without sacrificing key performance options, it includes the same extended footboard and double chain drive as the 910, and the patented recessed setting that provides a balance between the natural feel of a chain drive pedal with lighter overall action. The 310's sprocket is approximately 40 percent lighter than the Iron Cobra's, and its combination of a unique nut and rod prevents the spring unit from loosening or twisting. A double version is also available at \$324.98.

❶ We have good news for left-handed (well, left-footed) fans of the **Trick Dominator** pedal, which is now available in a lefty model. The Lefty Dominator has the same direct-drive action, anodized

black longboard-style aluminum footboard, and ingenious spring tension mechanism as the original. The auxiliary pedal is also a fully functioning single pedal, which is a nice touch. MSRP is \$1,100.

FOR THAT OTHER FOOT

❷ **Axis Percussion** has drawn from its celebrated bass pedal innovations with the new Laser hi-hat, designed to complement the A21 Laser drum pedal and its symmetrical footboard. The front leg assembly has a 150-degree spread, allowing enough rotation for comfortable double pedal placement. You can fine-tune spring tension using a six-way adjustment, making it easy to quickly change and remember various tension settings. The Laser comes with the Axis Pro clutch, made of lightweight anodized aluminum. The clutch has a three-point feltless washer system and lets the player independently tilt the top cymbal. MSRP is \$370.

❸ On the heels of the popular 9000XF extended footboard bass drum pedal, **DW** has extended (sorry, pun intended) the longer design to the new 9500XF hi-hat stand, with a footboard that's about 1" longer than the original. Available in two-legged and three-legged versions, the stand uses a chain-drive twin cam design with a patented double eccentric cam to increase footboard sensitivity and response. Spring tension is infinitely adjustable and has a locking feature. The two-legged 9500XF is \$533.99 MSRP; the traditional three-legged model is \$516.99.

❸ The Laser hi-hat from Axis Percussion has a 150-degree front leg assembly and a clutch that allows independent tilt of the top cymbal.



COME SIT A SPELL

If you're looking for a custom throne, you can sit in style with **Rooster Thrones'** fully customizable drum seats. Bases are standard Gibraltar double-braced models, but the tops go crazy with all sorts of options. You can choose the accent cord color circling the seat (available in glitter or smooth vinyl), then choose the base color in crocodile, glitter, ostrich, or smooth vinyl textures. There are 24 available colors for the seat top (in smooth vinyl), which comes in a choice of a regular circular shape or bicycle-seat style. You're not done yet. Then select an image or upload your own artwork to the company's website to be imprinted on top of the seat. Finally, you have

the option of lighting the seat in red, white, amber, or blue. The full throne with hardware is \$399.99 MSRP, the seat top only without hardware is \$299.99, and Rooster will re-cover your existing throne top incorporating all the above options for \$199.99.

Got back problems? You aren't alone. The **SpinalGlide Drummer's Glider** throne comes to the rescue with its split-seat design, which is independently fitted with springs. This provides complete mobility of the lower back and pelvis, and prevents repetitive strain injury to sensitive areas, without compressing the lower back. Billed as the world's first ergokinetic throne, it features a five-legged base, and is available in a cloth top (\$380 MSRP) or breathable faux leather for \$20 more.

❹ Available in a two- and three-legged versions, the 9500XF hi-hat stand from DW features a longer footboard.



❹ Trick's Dominator is now available in a lefty model. Its auxiliary pedal is also a fully functioning single pedal.



7 DW added the 9399AL Airlift Tom/Snare Stand to its patented Airlift stand series.

NEW LINEUPS

7 What's a new year without some new complete sets of hardware? Complementing the patented Airlift series of stands, **DW** has introduced the 9399AL Airlift Tom/Snare Stand. Designed to hold 10" to 16" rack toms (or snare drums), the Airlift stand uses an internal air shock system to effortlessly adjust height, similar to the way office chairs (and some drum thrones) float up and down depending on the weight applied to the seat. The stand features isolators on its arms to prevent choking of your drum's natural resonance. MSRP is \$366.99.

8 You don't have to use the rack that comes out of your new e-kit's packaging, now that **Gibraltar** has unveiled some new racks for electronic setups. The Road Series Stealth E-Rack (\$660 MSRP) and Chrome Stealth E-Rack (\$725) both feature a 30" curved bar design with two 30" horizontal tiers. The racks come with four L-rods

8 Upgrade your e-kit rack with the Chrome Stealth E-Rack from Gibraltar.

and multiclamps and are perfect for mounting electronic pads, cymbal pads, and a controller module on an all-in-one compact setup. Of course, they can be customized using any of Gibraltar's existing rack and mounting accessories, so you can take the design anywhere your little heart desires.

9 If you're obsessed with finding the lightest possible hardware, Newcomer **Mair Drums** is offering 100 percent industrial-grade carbon fiber stands with aluminum connection points, finished with a protective coating. Given the properties of carbon fiber, we expect the hardware to be durable, despite its feathery weight. The full line-up features snare stand (\$119 MSRP), hi-hat stand (\$99), cymbal stand (\$129), and boom stand (\$139). The company also introduced a carbon-fiber drum rack (\$770) that uses 1.5" diameter tubing in various lengths.

10 **Natal** introduced two new hardware lines to the U.S. market in 2015. The Standard Series is lighter in weight than the Pro Series, yet shares many similar features (both are built in the same factory). Both lines offer a hi-hat (Pro Series is two-legged rather than the Standard's three legs), snare stand (with hex



9 Mair Drums' new line of feathery light 100 percent industrial-grade carbon fiber stands include snare and hi-hat models.



rod mount and extendable cradle), and boom stand (with arms that disappear neatly into the vertical shaft, enabling conversion to a straight stand). All stands rest on double-braced bases and feature memory locks. MSRPs are boom stand (\$147.50 Standard; \$190 Pro), hi-hat stand (\$197.50 Standard; \$300 Pro), snare stand (\$147.50 Standard; \$217.50 Pro) and double tom stand (\$190, Pro Series only).

11 **Tama's** value-priced Roadpro hardware line enjoyed some significant upgrades for 2015. All stands now include Tama's Glide-Tite grip joints to maximize resonance while eliminating rattle.

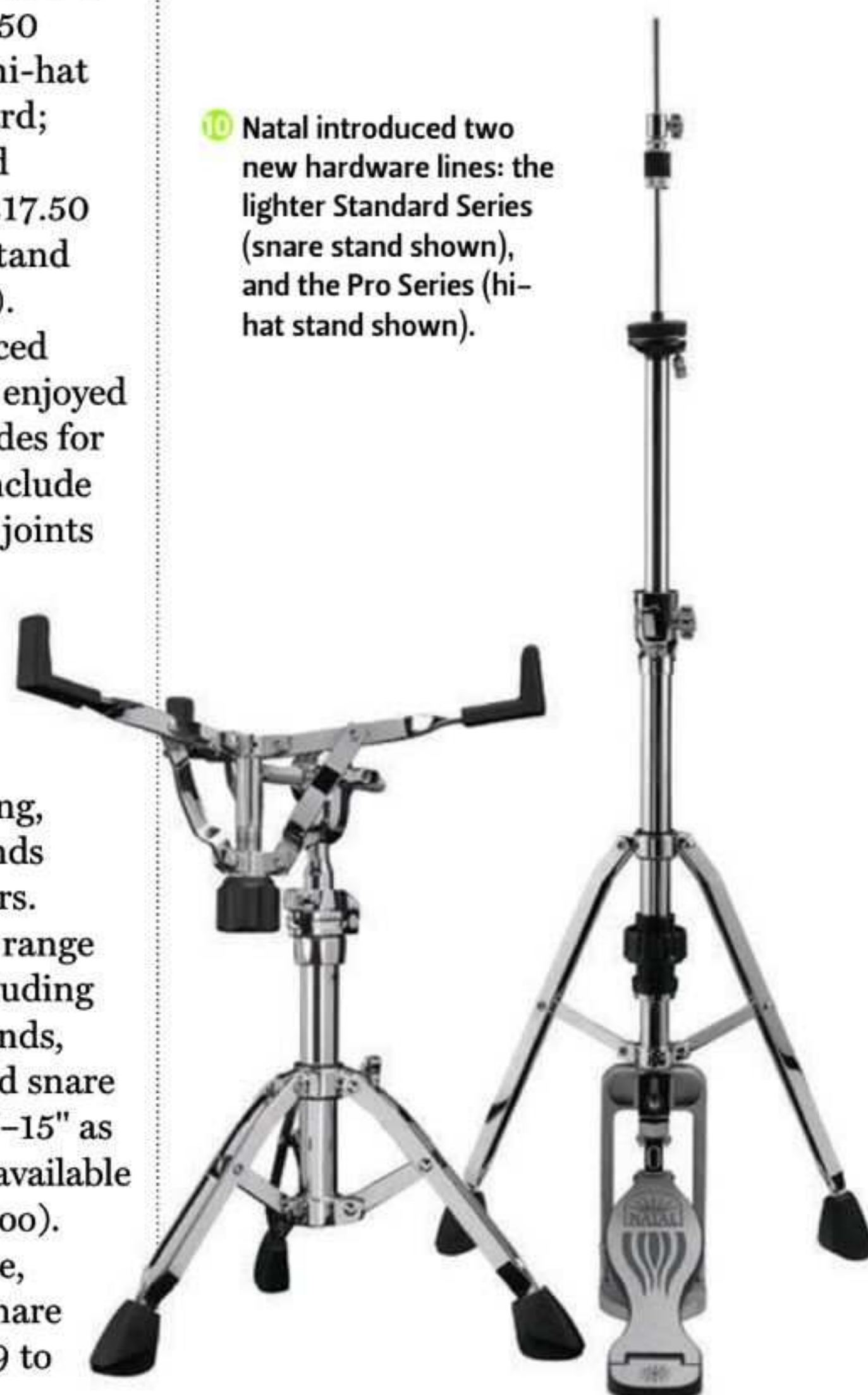
Base sections now employ beefier 28.6mm diameter tubing, and snare and tom stands feature Omni-Ball tilters. Roadpro offers the full range of drum hardware, including cymbal stands, tom stands, cymbal/tom stands, and snare stands available for 12"-15" as well as 10"-12" drums (available in low profile models, too). Budget-friendly in price, Roadpro cymbal and snare stands range from \$139 to

\$186 MSRP, and tom stands from \$222 to \$311. (Hi-hat stands aren't offered in the Roadpro line.)

EVEN CAJONS NEED SOME LOVIN'

Even though the cajon was originally seen as a great all-in-one instrument, lots of players have begun adding on to it to create mini setups. Seizing the opportunity, **Dixon** has introduced two cajon hardware packs to help with your build-out. Designed for hand drumming, the J3 Hand Percussion Setup cajon hardware pack (\$369.99 MSRP) has a boom cymbal stand, cymbal stacker, cowbell slapper, adjustable tray, stick/mallet holder, four-post percussion mount, percussion pedal mount, and a padded hardware bag. And for players who want to create a sit-down setup that mimics a drum kit, the J4 Drum Kit Setup pack (\$429.99) has a boom cymbal stand, snare stand, cymbal

10 Natal introduced two new hardware lines: the lighter Standard Series (snare stand shown), and the Pro Series (hi-hat stand shown).



11 Tama added significant upgrades to its value-priced Roadpro hardware line. Tom, snare, and combo cymbal/tom stand shown.



stacker, auxiliary hi-hat with clamp, stick/mallet holder, snare hoop percussion mount, and padded hardware bag.

Many things are even better the second time around, like **Gibraltar's** 2nd Generation cajon pedal. Available in either chain or strap drive, it utilizes a ball-end cable system that is now mounted to the pedal frame for improved positioning and stability. Cams are kept in a fixed position with no adjustment needed, and the chain-drive pedal features a new roller cam for a smoother feel. MSRP is \$169.99. **Meinl** also introduced a new cajon pedal (\$248 MSRP), which features a smooth cable, cradle mount, soft beater, and spring tension adjustment.

SOMETIMES THE LITTLE THINGS MATTER MOST

12 As your setup becomes more complex, small hardware accessories can become as important as the floor stands they mate up with.

How about adding a triangle into your setup? **Black Swamp's** DiSanza Triangle Trigger (\$132 MSRP) can be mounted to any existing straight stand, is adjustable both horizontally and vertically, and can fit up to an 8" triangle. It features a rotating beater mount that will hold three

triangle beaters simultaneously, and comes with a Spec2 beater. A finger cymbal attachment (\$38 MSRP) is also available, just in case you have a belly-dancing gig coming up.

Similar to DW's Dogbones, **DDrum's** new D-Bones allow the drummer to mount a cymbal arm from the end of boom arms or L-rods. The D-Bones come in two lengths, and can be angled on either end. One end mounts to the rod or arm while the other holds a boom arm. Perfect for placing a cymbal where you don't have a lot of room for another stand

12 The DiSanza Triangle Trigger by Black Swamp can be mounted to any straight stand.



base. MSRP is \$54.99 for the D-bone and boom arm.

Drumcams are all the rage, and **DW** just made it easier to mount your GoPro camera on your drum kit with the new GoPro Camera Mount (\$24.99 MSRP). Designed to fit on top of a cymbal stand, the mount securely holds the camera, which can use the stand's tilter mechanism to aim in any direction you choose. **DW** also recently introduced an iPad Mounting Bracket (\$49.99 MSRP), which similarly links to a cymbal tilter to enable the player to integrate an iPad into a

drum kit. (I use one of these on a short boom arm clamp off my hi-hat stand.)

Attention, vintage drum aficionados — **Gibraltar** has introduced a line of parts ideal for refurbishing a vintage drum, or for lending a retro look to your new one. The company's 14" Vintage Single-Flanged Stick Chopper Hoops are available for both batter and snare side (\$39.99 MSRP each). They're a bit thicker than pre-1957 stick chopper hoops and provide a more open and dry sound than die-cast models. A three-point Vintage Style Throw-off (\$37.99) and Vintage Style Butt End (\$8.99) are ideal for that old-school vibe, and if you're using single-flanged hoops, Gibraltar now offers Vintage Hoop Tension Rod Clips (\$22 MSRP for a pack of six). Complete the snare drum refurb with 20-Strand Brass Snare Wires (\$20) and Vintage Aged Nylon Snare Cord (\$6.99 for a six-cord pack).

13 **SONIClear** has been the buzzword at **Mapex** for the past year, thanks to the company's groundbreaking bearing edge of the same name. Now Mapex has introduced its SONIClear



13 The Mapex SONIClear tom holder clamp in chrome

tom holder clamp for 2015. Available in chrome, black plated, or black chrome finish, it's specially designed with a low-mass bridge to preserve head and shell vibration without transmitting energy through the stand. An omni-ball arm adjustment allows positioning of the tom at any angle,

and the clamp is spring-hinged with position markings for accurate and consistent setup.

It fits onto stand tubes ranging from 0.625" to 1.5", and is currently included with the company's Saturn V drum kits. \$49 MSRP.

14 Pity the poor wing nut. For the past decade or so, intrepid tinkerers have worked to come up with more efficient ways to secure and remove cymbals from cymbal stands. On the surface, this sounds like a lot of effort for little payoff. But any drummer who ever crawled around a dark stage searching for a missing wing nut can appreciate new options. The latest is **PinchClip**, a stainless-steel flange that flexes when pinched so that the holes in its overlapping arms align, allowing the clip to be quickly applied and removed from the stand. When finger pressure is released, the specially designed arms separate and securely grab on to any threaded device. Say goodbye to wing nuts forever.



14 Say goodbye to wingnuts and hello to PinchClip.

15 If you want to pump up your hi-hat's bling factor, you might want to look into the new clutches offered by **Sweet Spot**. Precision machined from solid stainless steel in Canada, the Sweet Spot Castle and Screw models come as close to being pieces of art as hi-hat clutches possibly could. The thumbscrew is hex-shaped rather than a traditional T-screw, and the bottom nuts are thick knurled aluminum



15 Sweet Spot custom clutches

pieces that lock together and, according to the company, will not loosen. It also includes a wear-resistant sleeve on the post to prevent cymbal keyholing, which is much appreciated by bronze lovers. Street price is \$39.95 each. Sweet Spot has also reimagined the standard 8mm cymbal stand tilter wing nut with the CNC-machined aluminum Tower Nut. Like the clutches, they look unique and come in black, silver, blue, and red at a street price of \$10.95.

16 Trick's 360 Mount is a new kind of suspension mount for toms or snare drums. Unlike the ubiquitous horseshoe design familiar to every drummer who bought a kit in the last 30 years, the 360 is a full die-cast circle that sits on top of the drum's triple-flanged hoop. Its design prevents unwanted movement or vibrations and distributes hoop pressure over a wider range. Various diameters are available in a powder-coated finish, and the bracket is



16 The 360 Mount is a new kind of suspension mount by Trick.

drilled with multiple holes to accommodate virtually any mount. A 14" ten-hole snare drum mount carries an MSRP of \$83.99; a 12" six-hole tom mount is \$76.99.

It seems fitting that we bring this year's Hardware Guide full circle by ending where we started — with a new pedal accessory. **Low Boy Custom Beaters** in Denver, Colorado offers custom two-way maple wood bass drum beaters. The company offers

plenty of ways to trick out your beater, with nearly 30 paint and stain options, as well as laser engraving for a monogrammed shield with your initials, custom text, or a specific image. Each cone-shaped beater weighs in at approximately 3.25 ounces and has two striking surfaces mounted on a stainless steel rod. The company says production time ranges from four days to two weeks, and pricing begins around \$30. **D**



BEE

New Series

Larger sizes sound more like a cross between crash and a china or a swish.

Available in
16" 18" 20" 22"



Trashy attack, Fast, with a fairly quick decay.

A unique and creative lathing process gives the outer edge its warped and malleable quality. Smaller sizes sound like a cross between a splash and a china,

Available in
8" 10" 12" 14"

Turkish

handmade cymbals from Turkey